

GHOST RIVER STATE NATURAL AREA

CLASS I SCENIC RECREATIONAL STATE NATURAL AREA

COUNTY:	Fayette	ACREAGE:	2,220
7.5° QUADRANGLE:	Grand Junction, SE Moscow	OWNERSHIP:	State of Tennessee
PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:	Coastal Plain	YEAR DESIGNATED:	1997

DESCRIPTION:

The Ghost River is a 2,220-acre section of the Wolf River in Fayette County located within the Coastal Plain of Tennessee. The natural area includes approximately 14 miles of the Wolf River beginning from the parking area near La Grange to Bateman Bridge. The Ghost River section of the Wolf is an unchannelized river section that meanders through bottomland hardwood forests, cypress-tupelo swamps, and open marshes. Some of the most impressive trees that occur here are large oaks that include cherrybark, water willow, and swamp chestnut. The low ridges above the river bottoms support tulip poplar, beech, and white oak with northern red oak infrequently occurring. The natural area also includes other ecologically significant uplands and sandy hills adjacent to the floodplain.

The braided channels and backwater sloughs of the Ghost River provide excellent habitat for rare aquatic organisms including endangered freshwater mussels such as the fat mucket (*Lampsilis siliquidea*), southern rainbow (*Villosa vibex*), southern hickorynut (*Obovaria jacksoniana*) and northern madtom (*Noturus stigmosus*). There are over 22 species of freshwater mussels found in the Wolf River. A variety of aquatic and terrestrial habitats also offer unique opportunities for observing birds and other wildlife.

The Ghost River section of the Wolf River received its name from the loss of river current as the water "flows" through open marshes and bald cypress-water tupelo swamps. A canoe trail has been blazed through the disorienting maze of Virginia willow, cypress, tupelos, and stunted pumpkin ash. Trail development is on-going, and includes a 600 ft. boardwalk in the Minnow Slough area.

SITE MANAGEMENT:

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Wolf River Wildlife Management Area, phone (901) 878-0855: Division of Natural Heritage, 401 Church St, 14th Floor L&C Tower, Nashville 37243, phone (615) 532-0431.

PUBLIC ACCESS:

Limited public access is allowed. Parking and a canoe trail are provided; no hiking trails are available at this time. Canoe trips following the blazed trail through swamps are possible from the bridge on Yager Rd. downstream to Bateman Rd. The total canoe time without stops is about 6 hours.

DIRECTIONS:

From Memphis: take Poplar Ave. (Hwy 57) east through Germantown and Collierville, then turn right on Bateman Rd. approximately 5 miles east of Moscow, and continue to the canoe take out point on the left side of the road before the bridge, or continue on State Hwy. 57 to La Grange and turn right on Yager Rd. and follow the road to the parking area on the right before the bridge. From Jackson: take Hwy 18 south through Bolivar and west on Hwy. 57, then turn left on Yager Rd. in La Grange to the parking area on the right before the bridge, or continue on Hwy. 57 and turn left on Bateman Bridge Rd. to the parking area on left before the bridge.